3: Densmore E-5 (1919-1920) 1929
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



led into the dance lodge by women. Some of the young men were in the full costume of Indian warriors, others were in civilian clothing, and Lawrence Murie wore the khaki uniform in which he had served with the artillery at the front. The young soldier who directed the dancing carried a sword which had belonged to one of his ancestors. The principal dance was the grass dance, followed by the war dance. The former is common to all the tribes of the northern plains, extending even to the Kutenai. According to Miss Fletcher, the dance originally was connected with the Hethushka Society of the Omaha, a society whose object was "to stimulate an heroic spirit among the people and to keep alive the memory of historic and valorous acts."[34]

A touching event in the second day's gathering was the expression of sympathy for the parents of the young man who died in France. They stood before the assembly while the chief and other leading men talked to them. The speaker placed his hands on the man's head, drawing them down the man's arms to his hands; he also held the man's hands closely in his own as he talked to him in a tender, earnest manner.

Numerous speeches were made, and the occasion was marked by dignity as well as rejoicing. The young soldiers appeared to be in excellent health, were friendly toward all, and made a good impression upon the white people who attended the gathering.

The song next following was sung by the women on the second day of the victory dance. It is an "honor song" and belonged to an old man named Brown Bear (*guruks*, bear; *narahata*, brown), who died not long ago. At a war dance he used to rise and sing this song without the drum, and "when he sang everybody cried." The custom of weeping and even wailing aloud at public gatherings has not been noted in tribes previously studied. The words of the song meant, "Nobody knows when the world will end." The informant added, "The old man used to say 'there is one person who knows when the world will end.'"

*Analysis.*—This is one of the "crying songs," and the sliding tone, especially in measures 7, 8, 13, and 14, is impossible to transcribe. The time was well maintained throughout the song. Attention is directed to a comparison of the count-divisions in the two rhythmic units and in the fifth and sixth measures from the close of the song. All the tones of the octave occur in the melody which progresses by a wide variety of intervals.

[34] Fletcher and La Flesche, The Omaha Tribe, Twenty-seventh Ann. Rept. Bur. Amer. Ethn., p. 480.

3: Densmore E-5 (1919-1920) 1929
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



*533 unit and another which resembles it but is not exactly like any other phrase in the song. The rhythm was identical in all the renditions. The melody is less interesting than the rhythm, the first half being based on the interval of a fifth (F to C) and the last half on a fourth (D to G), with F as the principal tone of the song.

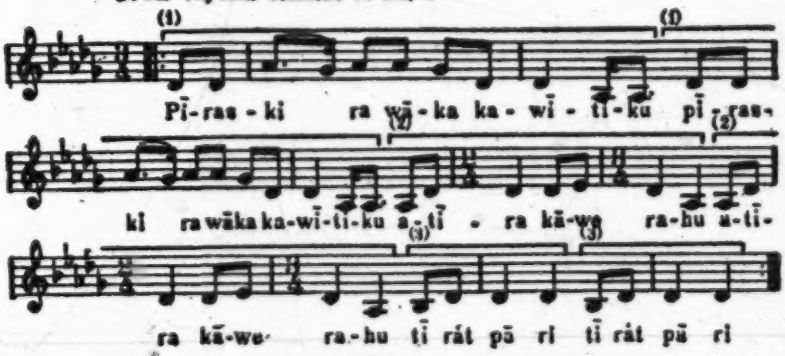
[775 ●765] The following song was also sung while the game was in progress. In explanation it was said, "This song belonged to a man who died long ago. He had one daughter and she died. The old man cried every day but at last, one night, he heard a cry in the woods. It was his daughter, who said, 'Father, I am in heaven.' Afterwards he did not cry any more."

**No. 47. "I Hear the Sound of a Child Crying"**

(Catalogue No. 1098)

Recorded by EFFIE BLAIN

Voice ♩ = 92
Drum ♩ = 92
Drum rhythm similar to No. 3




| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Piraski | ra | wāka | kawītiku | atīra | kāwe |
| Child | have | sound | crying | mother | is she |
| rahu | tī | rāt | pā | ri | |
| coming | here | I do | walk | around | |

FREE TRANSLATION

I hear the sound of a child crying "Is my mother coming? Here I walk around."

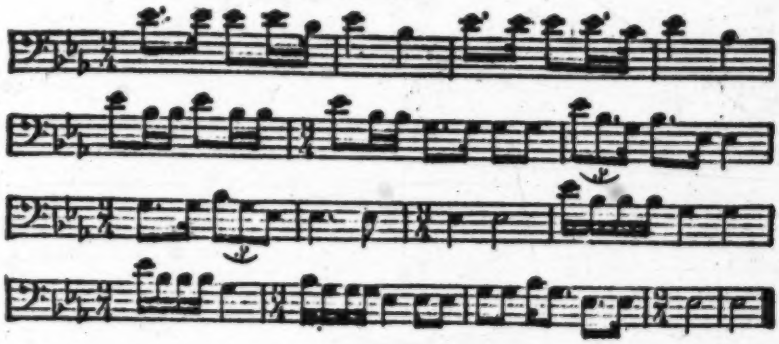
*Analysis.*—This melody is broadly outlined by the intervals of a fifth (D flat–A flat) and a fourth (A flat–D flat). The interval of a major third does not occur and almost one-third of the intervals are fourths. The song contains three rhythmic units occurring consecutively as in No. 42. The first unit is the longest, the second is shorter

3; Densmore E-5 (1919-1920) 1929
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



No. 81. "The Message of a Star" (Catalogue No. 1126)
Recorded by JOHN LUWAK

*533

Voice ♩ = 76
Drum ♩ = 76
Drum-rhythm similar to No. 20

*533 The singer who recorded the next song spent his childhood in
●765 Nebraska, before the Pawnee moved to Oklahoma. His mother died when he was 3 years old and he grieved a long time for her. His father sang this song to comfort him and said, "We can do nothing when a person dies; we can only pray. Perhaps some day you will be a man and have children around you." When he grew
[424] up his father, who was still living, taught him the song and told him of its early use. He made it into a war dance and it is known as his song.

*533 *Analysis.*—This is one of the songs in which the Indians "cry as they sing," making the intonation unsteady in a portion of the melody. In this instance the first three and last three measures were sung with good intonation but a *glissando* was used on the descending progressions in the fourth and fifth measures. In some of the renditions this was exaggerated and produced a wailing effect. The song is characterized by a large compass and a descending trend.

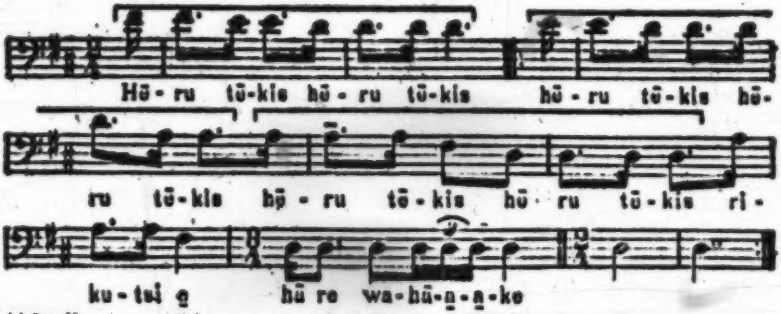
3: Densmore E-5 (1919-1920) 1929
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



**No. 82. Song to Comfort a Child's Grief**

(Catalogue No. 1105) 533*

Recorded by WICITA BLAIN

Voice ♩= 66
Drum not recorded

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahēru[84] | tēkis | rikūtsi | hē | re |
| Dear | child | stop crying | yonder | there |

wahūko
heavens

FREE TRANSLATION

My dear child, stop crying,
Yonder there, in the expanse of the heavens, is where power dwells.

The next song belonged to the first wife of Roaming Chief, who was a close friend of the singer. She had a little girl who died when about 8 months old. Although she had several other children she grieved for this baby and sang the following song about it. The woman's name was Curuk'siwa. 565 4x4

**No. 83. Mother's Song for a Dead Baby**

(Catalogue No. 1009)

Recorded by EVVIE BLAIN

Voice ♩= 72
Drum not recorded

*Analysis.*—This melody is exceedingly simple in both melody and rhythm. The rhythmic unit occurs three times, followed by a phrase which begins like the rhythmic unit but changes to a descending

[84] The first syllable of this word was omitted by the singer.

3: Densmore E-5 (1919-1920) 1929
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



When the little boy was about half-grown he heard that a war party was to start. He told his mother that he wanted to go, and he wanted her and his grandmother to make him some moccasins. He also wanted arrows, a bow and a quiver, and all the equipment of a warrior. When the old man heard this he called the boy and said, "Do you realize what you are doing?"

"Yes, I am grown to be a man."

"Do you have dreams at night?"

"Yes."

"Can you relate some of them?"

"Yes."

"Tell one to me."

"In my dream I was with a war party. I found myself coming toward home through deep snow."

"That is enough," said the old man. "You can go."

The women had sent the boy to his grandfather, thinking he would keep him at home, and they were greatly surprised to learn that the grandfather had told the boy to go with the warriors. It was fall when the war party started. As winter was coming near it was noised through the camp that all the war party had been killed and the people began to mourn. The women of this family mourned exceedingly and cut their flesh with knives, but the old man sat and laughed at them, or smoked his pipe. This went on for about 10 days. Then his wife said, "You did not care for our grandchild," and his daughter said, "Why do you not mourn?" The old man said to his wife, "You remember that you turned the boy over to me when he wanted to go to war. You made moccasins for him and filled his quiver with arrows. I questioned him and found that he had had a dream in which he was returning alone through deep snow. That dream will come true. He is coming home, so I want you all to stop mourning."

They would not believe him, but one day, after a snow, some people going out from the village met the young man returning. He said, "All the warriors were killed except myself."

The man rode back and cried through the village, "Sariitsaris' grandchild is coming through the deep snow."

Everyone in the lodge was excited, except the old man. He did not rush out to meet his grandson. The women urged him to go, but he said, "He is coming; never mind."

When the young man entered the lodge his grandfather said, "Sit on my knees." The old man passed his hands downward over the young man's head and body in the tribal manner of "blessing," and said, "I believed in your dream and now you are here."

Then he told him to sit yonder and said, "I ask you—when attacked, did you hide in a ravine? When you were a little boy and cooled my

5: Dorsey & Murie E, I-5 (1903-1907) 1940
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



854 as rapidly as they were shed, just underneath the ground within the
856 lodge on the south side, and to say to a tooth as they buried it:
"Make my other teeth grow quickly."

861 The early training of the child was largely in the hands of the
855 grandmothers, who took it upon themselves to give instruction in
[603] tribal and family ethics. They assumed the right to enforce their
[867] injunctions and commands by blows or by the use of the whip, and it is claimed that in former times, before the Skidi had been modified through contact with white men, the rearing of children was very strict and they were often scolded and severely punished by the father, mother, or grandparents. Aside from the deference young children were supposed to pay adults, they were taught to show respect for their parents by not molesting them, to remain silent when older people were talking, to refrain from approaching too closely the altar in the earth lodge, and carefully to avoid making a disturbance about the scenes of ceremonies. During this period an older sister might assist in correcting the child. As a boy grew
868 older he was given technical instruction by his grandfathers in the making of bows and arrows, in the playing of games, etc. Girls
[603] were taught by their grandmothers to prepare food, to dress hides, and to do the work which fell to the lot of women. This early training was often supplemented by the telling of myths containing some moral precept. For example, the child was told not to steal, the point being especially illustrated by the tale of the boy who stole his sister's seed corn, and, because he grew angry for being scolded, turned into an eagle. This particular story also has reference to the respect and affection with which siblings were taught to regard one another. Brotherly love was specially emphasized. Boys were told that in later years they should love their brothers even more than their wives, for there is a well-known saying among the Skidi
[965] that at a man's death his brother will mutilate himself with grief and his sister cut her hair and mourn sincerely, but his wife will simulate tears by spitting in her hands, while she peeps through her fingers looking for another husband. [Also stated elsewhere as: "Brother and sister will mutilate themselves, but your wife will never throw a piece of her vulva in your grave."] Love and respect of parents were also emphasized as something to be maintained throughout life and never neglected, for the duties of parents to children and children to parents never ended.

855 Although the training of children was primarily under the immediate direction of the parents and grandparents, certain other

5: Dorsey & Murie E, I-5 (1903-1907) 1940
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



The recognition of the death of friends or relatives was marked among the Skidi by certain mourning customs, more or less formal in their nature.

In case a man or woman died of old age there was no mourning feast, and the formal period of mourning lasted only during the day of the burial. At this time all the members of the band assembled and each placed his hands upon the body of the deceased, thus expressing the hope that he too might reach an old age.

Should a man of middle age die a natural death, it was considered a disgrace. There was no feast or formal mourning on the part of the tribe or the relatives. Such a natural death was thought to be caused by the Black Wind from the south and was an indication that the man's life was useless.

If a chief of any prominence died, the whole band mourned for several months. However, if his death occurred early in the spring, just before the great ceremonies were to begin, the mourning could be concluded at the end of four days. This was brought about by a priest, who formally asked one of the chiefs when they might have the mourning feast; the latter set it at the fifth day after death, in order that spring ceremonies of such great importance should not be delayed and thus to prevent hardship and possibly famine from visiting the band. On the fifth day the chiefs visited the lodge of the deceased, the first man to enter acting as spokesman. He told the widow to sweep the lodge; then he spread mats and pillows, and asked the family to leave. The latter made the lodge ready, placing the deceased's medals, clothing, and other personal effects northeast of the entrance, whereupon they left and sat outside. When the chiefs had all arrived and had arranged themselves in a circle, the son of the dead chief entered and said: "Chiefs, it is now time that we cease to mourn for my father. We have placed his belongings for you and tied his ponies outside." The son then retired from the lodge. The spokesman addressed the chiefs, reminding them of the good qualities of the deceased. Other chiefs followed with eulogistic speeches. When these were concluded, the spokesman lit a pipe and selected one of those present to offer smoke to the earth in honor of the dead man. The chief selected took the pipe, and standing northeast of the fireplace, blew four puffs to the earth. Addressing the earth, he said: "Chief, you have gone from us; you have returned to mother earth; you have travelled on the road leading to the village of our people. On your journey turn back. Speak to us who are yet living, and say: 'May all good gifts which

5: Dorsey & Murie E, 1-5 (1903-1907) 1940
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



might have come to me had I lived be given to my people, for I need such gifts no more.'" He then emptied the ashes from the pipe upon the ground, passing his hand down the stem toward the earth four times. After this he walked around the lodge and handed the pipe, stem downward, to the spokesman. The latter thanked him, as did all present. An errand man was sent to the creek for water. The spokesman distributed the robes and presents among the chiefs. The errand man, having returned with the water, was told to call the family of the dead chief; they entered the lodge and sat in a line north of the entrance. The spokesman poured water into a wooden bowl and handed it to the mourner who sat at the west end of the line. This man then washed his face for the first time since the burial of the chief, and the other mourners washed their faces in turn. The errand man took the bowl and washed the semi-circular line of mourning paint from the spokesman's face, whereupon the latter placed water in front of the chiefs, who washed a little of the clay from each other's faces. The bowl was returned to the mourners, each of whom was given a sip of water from a dipper. The errand man then gave each chief a drink from the same bowl. Next the feast was brought in and placed west of the fireplace. The spokesman put meat in a bowl and gave a small piece to each of the mourners to eat. He returned to his place, and the errand man divided the meat among the others present, all of whom had fasted since the burial of the chief. After the feast was over the spokesman gave another address, and the ceremony came to an end. It should be borne in mind that this was a band ceremony involving all Skidi, irrespective of village affiliations.

The same ceremony was performed on the death of a medicine-man, the medicine-men participating and not the chiefs. Also the same ceremony was used for a warrior of prominence.

The death of a poor man was marked by mourning and fasting on the part of the family only. This lasted for three days, at the end of which time it was the duty of one of the chiefs to "wipe the family's tears away." He asked his wife to prepare food, especially meat, and told her to take it to the lodge of the mourners. No invitations were extended for this feast, but spectators, particularly friends of the family, might be present. The family of the deceased sat north of the entrance, while the spectators sat around the fireplace. The chief entered the lodge and addressed the family, telling them that it was time to stop mourning. His errand man brought him a bowl of water, after which the chief washed the face

5: Dorsey & Murie E, I-5 (1903-1907) 1940
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



of each mourner, asking that he cease crying. The chief gave each one a little food to break the fast. The remainder of the food was next divided, though nothing was distributed among the spectators; however, at the end of the feast they thanked the chief for his services.

Certain observances were obligatory for widows and widowers. A woman who had lost her husband was supposed to observe carefully a mourning period of at least a year, and in case he had been a man of prominence she might prolong this to two years. During this time she lived with her own people or she might stay in the lodge of her husband's parents. In the latter case it was understood that at the termination of the mourning period she would become the wife of her deceased husband's younger brother or the wife of his sister's son. Until that time she was supposed to remain chaste. A childless widow invariably returned to her parents' lodge, but following the mourning period she could remarry in the manner just noted or she could marry an outsider. However, in the latter instance she would not be considered as desirable as at the time she first married and the gifts to her relatives would be less. Thus if ten ponies were presented at her first marriage only one or two would be paid when she married again.

Widowers were supposed to mourn for their wives at least two years, and sometimes mourned three. Many never remarried. Very often when a widower did not seek another spouse he was urged by his relatives to remarry, and they expressed their desire by offering to furnish the presents necessary to secure a second wife. As a rule, although a widower mourned for the usual period, he did not consider marrying again until he had gone on the war-path, taken scalps, and captured ponies. This was a somewhat formal way of terminating mourning and making himself eligible for remarriage.

It remains to record certain other observances connected with burial and mourning customs. As a rule, the close friends of the deceased performed some act of bodily mutilation immediately after or just before the burial, the men slashing their arms, breasts, or legs with knives and the women cutting their hair. Hair thus cut was at once burned, for fear that the Morning Star would see it upon the grave and claim the victim as his own sacrifice. For the same reason horse's hair cut off during burial services was also burned.

On the burial of a warrior killed in battle his close friends and relatives seized the first opportunity to visit enemy country

5: Dorsey & Murie E,I-5 (1903-1907) 1940
NQ18 Pawnee NQ18



and obtain a scalp. This was carried home to the village on a pole, and scalp dances were inaugurated. The scalp was consecrated to one of the deities of the heavens, and the man who had taken it wrapped a piece of it in a small buckskin sack with tobacco. This was tied to a long stick representing an arrow and thrust into the grave. Another small piece of the scalp was burned upon the grave.

The name of a dead person could not be mentioned during the mourning period. If anyone mentioned the name of an individual who had been killed in war, it was thought that he would probably suffer the same fate as the person killed.

Reference has been made to the fact that personal belongings were buried with the dead. However, there were certain exceptions to this practice. Personal war bundles containing meteorites or any objects supposed to have had their origin in the heavens were not buried. This was in accordance with the belief that these objects belonged in the heavens and not in the ground. Hence, when an individual possessing such objects died, and if the relatives did not want them, the bundle was unwrapped and the objects were placed on a high hill, whence they returned to the heavens. Such objects were supposed to be the children of stars, watched over by them, and it was believed that when people had no further use for these "children," they would return to their parents in the sky. Also, if a medicine-man died during the time he was giving instruction to his son, his medicine bundle was retained for the boy's use when he became of age.

A further illustration of the burial of belongings with the dead is contained in the following incident. A Skidi chief's daughter died. The father had received calumet pipe sticks from the Chaui band, and his daughter had participated in the ceremony accompanying the gift. Her death followed shortly after the ceremony and was attributed to the belief that the ceremony had not been properly performed. Consequently, over her grave her father placed the pipe sticks, oriole's nest, wildcat skin, gourd rattles, and tobacco bag that comprised the special objects used in the ceremony. That year drought prevailed, the crops withered, buffalo could not be found, and the Skidi were forced to depend on their cache reserves. The Chaui priest who had originally brought the pipe sticks visited the Skidi, and with the chief to whom he had presented them, went to the grave, removed the ceremonial objects, wrapped them in a bundle, and taking the earth from over the body, placed the bundle next to it. He then re-filled the grave. Shortly after, there